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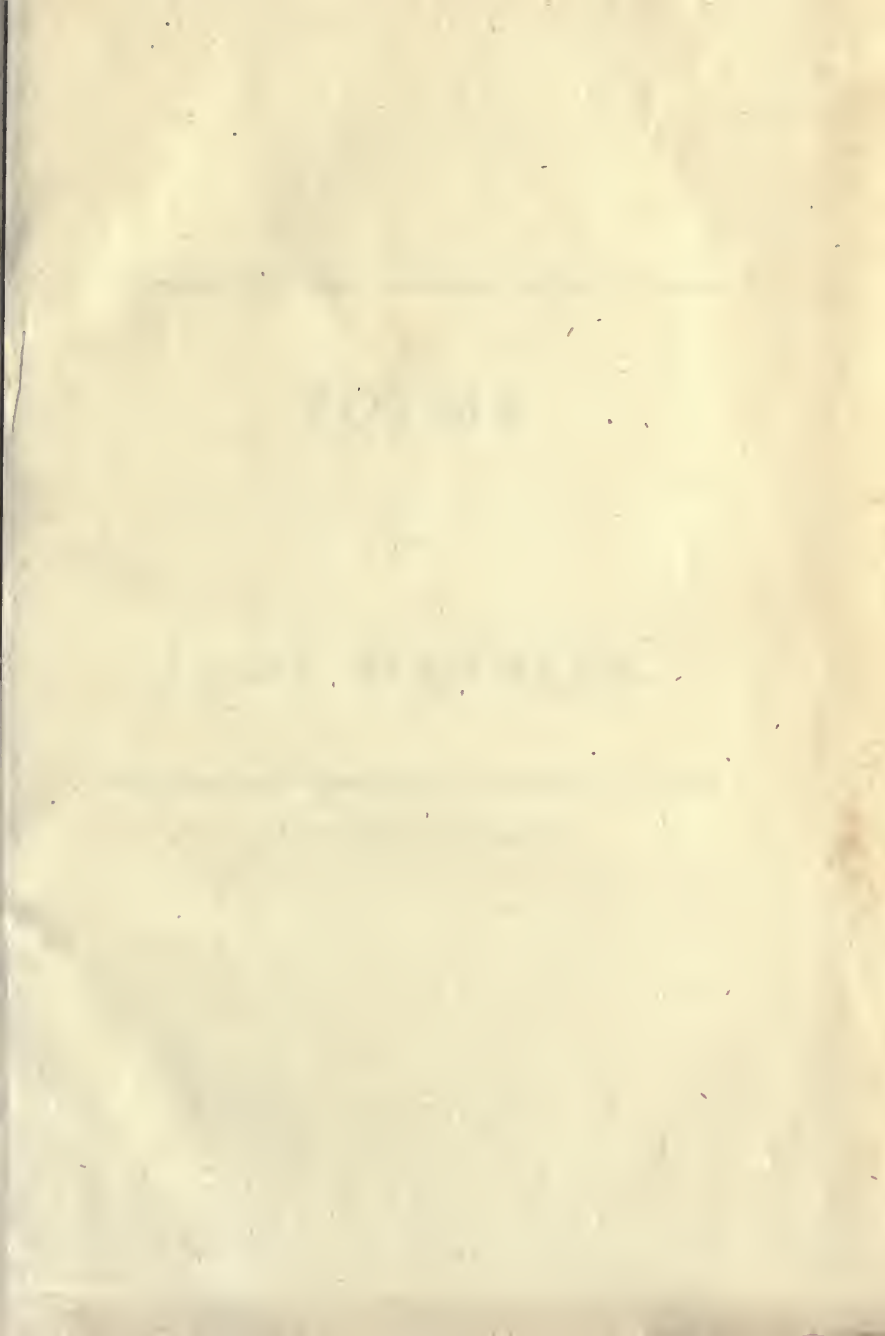














POEMS

BY

LADY MANNERS.

PRICE THREE SHILLINGS.

FORMS

THEY MATTERS

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POEMS

BY

LADY MANNERS.

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REFLECTIONS
ON
THE PREVALENCE OF FASHION.

Now, while the fields in vivid green are drest,
And early flowers adorn Spring's simple vest;
While brighter suns the opening landscape warm,
And Nature's beauties in each object charm;
Far from the tumult of the worldly crowd,
From mad extravagance and folly loud,
Here let me sit, and court the Muse to tell
By what attractions, by what magic spell,
Fashion's frail chains the heaven-born soul can bind,
And fix on trifles the deluded mind;
Can lead us from the path mild Reason taught,
Corrupt our principles, debase our thought;
And render Man, for noblest views design'd,
To all Creation's boundless glories blind.

The Sons of earth in emulation vie,
To gain applause, to draw the public eye,
And to become, pursuing different rules,
The praise and envy of surrounding fools.
To few, alas! th' indulgent hand of heaven
Has dazzling wit or deep discernment given:
To few superior talents are allow'd,
To rise sublime above the grovelling croud;
To view unmov'd what meaner mortals prize,
And all Ambition's glittering toys despise.
Not so the favourites of Fortune's train—
Her's are the gay, the trivial, and the vain;
To them profuse the partial goddess pours
Her lavish honours, and her golden stores.
Yet shall the happy triflers want a name,
Unnoted in the shining lists of Fame?
A name nor wealth nor titles can bestow:
That, and that only, to ourselves we owe.
Convinc'd of this, to gain the envied prize
Each candidate some various method tries.
In rural scenes, where peaceful shades delight,
And flowery meadows fix the wandering sight—

Where pebbly streams in wild meanders flow,
And perfum'd winds o'er beds of roses blow—
Even there the love of fame mankind inspires,
And rustic breasts with rustic passions fires.
The 'Squire feels anguish more than words can tell,
If other hounds in swiftness his excel;
If other fleeds, more forward in the race,
Outstrip his coursers in the devious chase.
The Country Justice, into years declin'd,
To more substantial honours turns his mind:
He glories in his barns with plenty stor'd,
And the luxuriance of his copious board;
Nor lets one care his placid mind molest—
Except some costlier dish should crown another's feast.
The rural Belle, impatient, seeks renown
In some new head-dress just arriv'd from Town;
Thinks how the wond'ring neighbourhood will gaze,
And circling beauties envy while they praise.
But few the cares that fill her artless breast,
Not yet by Vice or tainted or deprest,
Compar'd to those more courtly belles engage,
Where Fashion governs with despotic rage;

Where her fair vot'ry with contempt surveys
The long-lost innocence of former days:
Sever'd from blushing Modesty and Truth,
The dear companions of her happier youth,
No ties can bind, no principles restrain,
And Love and Duty plead, but plead in vain.
Yet, of the numbers who in error tread,
More are by weakness than by vice misled—
And rather act an imitative part,
Than follow the plain dictates of their heart.—
Elected by a grateful people's voice,
More from a sense of duty than from choice,
To join in senates in the loud debate,
The good Aurelius leaves his lov'd retreat.
With him the young Hermione he leads—
Hermione, who rear'd 'mid circling shades,
Remote from Fashion and remote from Strife,
He chose the partner of his blameless life.
Her cheeks disclos'd the rose's softest dye,
And innocence beam'd lovely from her eye;
On her red lips a mild composure charm'd,
And perfect symmetry her figure form'd.

In this new scene with timid steps she mov'd,
And blushing heard when Flattery approv'd;
The fluttering beaux in vain to please her sought—
Her dear Aurelius fill'd her every thought.
Now Envy loudly ridicules the fair,
Censures her dress, her manner, and her air;
And every female, swell'd with jealous hate,
Condemns what she can never imitate;—
And, lower than the last of womankind,
To theirs his taunts the silly coxcomb join'd,
Whom Nature form'd in a capricious mood,
Scorn'd by the wise, and pitied by the good.
Hermione abash'd view'd Envy's sneer,
While its rude satires pierc'd her listening ear.
By nature virtuous, but too weak her sense
To brave th' attacks of dark Malevolence,
She leaves reluctant all she fondly loves,
And follows what her judgment disapproves;
With follies first, with vices next complied,
And sacrific'd her feelings to her pride.
Now, first in Dissipation's giddy train,
Behold Hermione in triumph reign:

No more she rises with the morning ray,
But wastes in cards the night—in sleep the day;
Her pallid cheek, its native colour fled,
Assumes the glow of artificial red;
Her charms decay, her wonted health is flown,
Her former rectitude for ever gone.
In vain with anxious care Aurelius tries
To clear the mists of error from her eyes.
At length he leads her to the rural plain,
Where once Contentment bless'd his wide domain;
But now no more Contentment will attend,
No more from Care's corrosive stings defend;
His chang'd Hermione he fondly mourns,
Whose alter'd heart no tenderness returns;
Till, long between contending passions tost,
His fortune sunk, his peace entirely lost,
He yielded to the welcome stroke of death,
And sigh'd 'Hermione!' with latest breath.
O sad vicissitude of human state!
Daughters of Virtue, with vain pride elate,
Condemn not here a sister's levity;
But trembling think, such you, perhaps, may be.—

Yet, if o'er this sad tale we drop a tear,
What mortal, say, from laughter can forbear,
When he beholds Emilius' awkward grace,
His figure mean, and consequential face,
And views his mind—receptacle for all
The follies that to wretched mortals fall?
Bred in the City to an humble fate,
The sober youth behind his counter sat:
His study was of stocks the rise and fall,
And his grand festival a Lord Mayor's ball.
When Fortune, careful of the fool and knave,
A large estate beyond his wishes gave,
He hastes to figure where the Great resort,
And quits th' Exchange to bustle through the Court.
To ape the courtly fop in vain he tries;
Now with Lord Trinket in his carriage vies;
Now games, now drinks, now swears—and all for fame,
Since more illustrious blockheads do the same.—
But hark! what knell, inspiring awful fear,
In broken sounds thus strikes my wounded ear?
That knell, it calls Olivia to the tomb,
Fallen in gay youth, in beauty's brightest bloom;

Adorn'd with sentiment, and sense refin'd,
Whose only fault was a too feeling mind.
Propitious Fortune, at her natal hour,
Had added wealth to Nature's lavish dower:
The rich Hortensio's child and only heir,
She grew and flourish'd in his guardian care,
Till the pleas'd father with delight survey'd
His fondest hopes accomplish'd in the maid:
With native graces heighten'd still by art,
Agenor sought, and won the virgin's heart:
Her sire consents, and Hymen's holy bands
Soon at the altar join their willing hands.
Unhappy fair! she hop'd the sacred rite,
Their hearts should ever with their hands unite,
Her husband still her lover should remain,
And Death alone dissolve their lasting chain.
Not so Agenor. Bred in Fashion's schools,
And blindly govern'd by her senseless rules,
He thought affection for a wife disgrac'd
The nice refinement of a man of taste.
In vain mankind with one consent declare
Olivia fairest amid thousands fair:

Blind to her charms, unworthy of her love,
To meaner beauties his affections rove;
And, seeking fancied bliss, his footsteps roam
Far from the genuine happiness of home.
A soft concern, mixt with offended pride,
Usurp'd the breast of his neglected bride,
To think that he alone unmov'd should view
Those peerless charms which all beside subdue.
At length her busy thought suggests a scheme
Destructive to her peace and to her fame,
And makes her strive by jealousy to gain
That fickle heart which scorn'd a milder chain.
Too soon the story restless scandal spread,
How fair Olivia, by resentment led,
Justly incens'd against a faithless spouse,
Had in her turn forgot her plighted vows.
Agenor heard the tale; and, wild with rage,
Mistaken honour urg'd him to engage
His life for her, whom his caprice disdain'd
While undefil'd her character remain'd.
Why should I on the sad relation dwell?
A hasty challenge sent—he fought, and fell!

Borne through those streets a senseless load of clay, }
Where late he wander'd negligent and gay, }
His alter'd features crowds with tears survey. }
But who can paint the anguish and despair
That rack'd the bosom of the hapless fair
Who caus'd his death, when, pierc'd with many a wound,
The man she lov'd a breathless corse she found?
Horror, contrition, grief, at once combin'd
To rouse each feeling of her tortur'd mind,
Till, her weak frame unequal to the strife,
Prone on Agenor's bier she clos'd her wretched life.
Learn hence, ye fair, to shun each dangerous art,
Nor even in thought from rectitude depart:
Be still unmov'd by Jealousy's alarms,
For Temper more than Wit or Beauty charms.
So, when old age shall spoil each transient grace,
Dim thy bright eyes, and wrinkle o'er thy face—
Steal from thy faded cheek the rose's hue,
And bend that form which now delights the view—
Still chaste affection with unclouded ray
Shall gild the evening of thy latest day;

Still powerful Virtue shall victorious prove,
And fix, where Beauty fails, a husband's love.—
Silius affects an absent careless mien,
Nothing by him is heard, and nothing seen;
Or, should his eyes a play or ball explore,
He listless yawns, and wishes it was o'er.—
His native England Lycidas disdains,
And quits her oaken groves for Gallia's plains:
Foreign his accent, foreign is his air,
His dress resplendent with Parisian glare;
And, while his apish tricks contempt inspire,
He vainly thinks the wondering crowds admire.—
Nothing so much delights Camillo's mind,
As to be thought a man of taste refin'd;
On pictures, statues, poems to decide,
And by his nod the sons of Genius guide.
Unnumber'd artists crow'd his plenteous board,
And needy Science courts the wealthy lord:
There, like the mimic heroes of the stage,
He acts Mæcenæ to the present age,
While starving wits, amid their venal lays,
Pay for substantial dinners empty praise.—

But these are trifling faults, and less proceed
From heart defective, than defective head.
But darker shades remain, whose force to paint,
Language is cold, ideas are but faint;
Crimes at which Reason starts with holy fear,
To which even Pity scarce can grant a tear.
Behold the reptile man, whose impious pride
Dares all that 's sacred, all that 's just deride;
Dares the existence of that God deny,
Who was, and is, through all eternity:
Whose power, resistless, to destroy or save,
To man, ungrateful man, a being gave;
Whose mercy doom'd his only Son to bleed,
Our sinful race from paths of Death to lead;
Who, omnipresent, all our guilt can view,
And pitying yet withholds the vengeance due!
But let me hope that few thus madly dare
Wage with Omnipotence a desperate war.
Most men acknowledge and revere a God,
And dread at intervals his chastening rod:
But scarce the tears of soft Contrition spring,
When, borne on Dissipation's airy wing,

And 'mid the world's ensnaring pleasures tost,
Too oft the thoughtless wanderer is lost.
Children of Error, then, a moment stay,
Nor scorn to listen to my artless lay,
Which seeks no recompense, but to impart
A ray of Truth to the bewilder'd heart.
Yet think an hour shall come, nor far that hour,
When Death's dread horrors shall each sense o'erpower;
When ye shall ask in vain a little time,
In vain lament the errors of your prime;
With terror view your near approaching end,
And helpless, hopeless, to the grave descend.
O then reform, while haply yet ye can,
While Providence allows a length'ning span,
Nor to a future time the change delay,
Perhaps your life may finish with this day;
The present day, the present hour alone,
Is all, weak mortal, thou can't call thine own.
Then seize this fleeting moment to deplore
Thy sins, resolv'd to yield to sin no more;
Regard life's darkest hours, its scenes most gay,
As showers and sun-beams of an April day;

And fix thy mind on that sublime abode,
Where soon thy spirit may rejoin its God;
There, mix'd with angels and archangels, raise
The hymn of glory to thy Maker's praise;
Thy views o'er vast, unmeasur'd space extend,
And taste pure joys, that know nor change nor end!

ALBERT and CECILIA.

A NORMAN TALE.

FOUNDED ON FACT.

A FAIRER form than fiction ever feign'd;
A bloom surpassing far the opening rose;
Eyes where with softness animation reign'd;
A heart that sympathiz'd in others' woes:

Such was Cecilia—ere a father's pride
Clouded the noon-tide of a morn so bright;
Condemn'd each feeling nature sanctified,
And clos'd each beauty in eternal night.

The haughty Anselm of his riches vain—
Vain of his ancestry, and high estate:
View'd unassuming merit with disdain;
Or thought it only centred in the great.

Each day, to win the young Cecilia's smiles,
The neighbouring barons to his castle throng,
And boast their ancient sires, whose warlike toils
Still crown the historian's page, and poet's song:

But vain the boast of each contending peer—
Vainly to win Cecilia's smiles they try;
No voice but Albert's gains her pensive ear—
No form but Albert's charms her down-cast eye.

Oft' she forsakes her father's splendid halls,
And hastes impatient to the waving shade;
Where Albert, while the tear of pity falls,
Unfolds his hopeless passion to the maid.

No sounding title favour'd Albert's claim;
Fortune to him her gifts did ne'er impart:
But kinder Nature gave the loveliest frame,
And gave (much more) the most unblemish'd heart.

What hours of happiness the lovers prov'd

While in soft converse pass'd the livelong day:

While each confess'd how ardently they lov'd;

And vow'd no time their passion should allay!

O, Sensibility! how truly blest

Is the fond mind in thy sensations lost!

More dear the pang that rends the feeling breast,

Than all that calm, dull apathy can boast.

Long did Cecilia nurse the rising flame,

And Albert's tender vows in secret hear;

Nor yet had envy, or censorious fame,

Divulg'd the tale to Anselm's watchful ear.

When, as mild evening o'er the varying sky

Dispers'd rich clouds of gold and purple hue;

And panting flocks along the meadows lie,

Cool'd by the freshness of the morning dew.—

With cautious steps Cecilia sought the bower,
Whose shade encircled all her soul held dear:
While anxious Albert counts the tedious hour;
Now cheer'd by hope, and now depress'd by fear:

But, when he saw his lov'd Cecilia nigh,
Each gloomy care forsook his boding breast;
And gay delight beam'd sparkling from his eye,
Blest in her presence—in her kindness blest.

The heart's emotions in each face appear;
The glow of transport brightens on each cheek—
The glance of joy, the sympathetic tear,
More than a thousand words, their passion speak.

The youth enraptur'd kneeling thank'd the maid;
Then both renew'd their vows of endless love:
Unhappy pair! your passion is betray'd—
Fatal to both those vows must shortly prove:

For, as it chanc'd in that ill-fated hour,
Near the green arbour Anselm musing past;
Heard their discourse, and entering in the bower,
The trembling lovers sunk confus'd, aghast!

"Degenerate girl" (the angry father cry'd)
"Who thus canst stoop to this ignoble choice;
"And dare to wound a Norman baron's pride,
"Unmov'd by duty's ties, or honor's voice—

"No more I own thee as my fortune's heir:
"Thy boasted charms to me no joys impart:
"For, shock'd by thy ingratitude, I tear
"Parental fondness from this injur'd heart,

"And thou, presuming youth! who durst aspire
"Proudly to join thy humble name with mine,
"Take the detested object you desire—
"Thy lov'd Cecilia shall be ever thine,

“ If to the summit of yon verdant hill,
“ Whose lofty brow o'erlooks this ample plain,
“ You bear the maid; nor rest a moment, till
“ Ev'en to the top thy venturous steps attain.”

What mighty task will daring love refuse,
The object of it's fond pursuits to gain?
Who in delusion's flattering mirror views
And grasps at shadows it can ne'er obtain.

The youth undaunted clasps the trembling fair,
Nor thinks the dangerous trial to decline:
“ This happy hour,” he cries, “ ends all my care,
“ And makes thee, dear Cecilia! ever mine.”

With eager haste he pass'd the level green,
And rapidly he climbs the steep ascent;
While numerous vassals throng'd to view the scene,
And prayers to Heaven for their deliverance sent.

Sadly prophetic of impending woe,
Cecilia's bosom heav'd with many a sigh;
And, while the tears of bitter anguish flow,
She fix'd on Albert an attentive eye.

"Alas!" she cried (and half suppress'd a tear),
"Yon fatal summit distant still I view."
"Chase, my Cecilia," he replied "each fear;
"Love shall his votary with new strength endue."

But Albert now no longer can conceal
His vigour lost—he climbs the hill with pain;
His fainting limbs a death-like languor feel,
And scarce his arms their lovely load sustain.

"Speak, my Cecilia, tell me that you love;
"Your voice can energetic force impart;
"Smile, and your lover shall triumphant prove."
She forc'd a smile, and press'd him to her heart.

Mute the spectators stand with anxious fear,
When Albert falters every cheek turns pale ;
And smiles of gladness on each face appear
When love still strives where human efforts fail.

At length their hearts with generous transports thrill,
Shouts of applause from every side arise :
Albert has gain'd the summit of the hill,
And breathless falls beneath his lovely prize,

Cecilia's circling arms around him thrown,
Her eyes behold him with exulting pride :
She cries, " My Albert, I am thine alone ;
" No human force can now our fates divide."

His clay-cold hand with fervency she press'd,
She gaz'd enamour'd on his faded cheek ;
" Say, dost thou love like me, like me art blest ?
" Confirm my happiness—O Albert speak !"

At length, essay'd in vain each tender care
Her lover's slumbering senses to restore,
By disappointment pierc'd and chill despair,
She sunk, and cried—"My Albert is no more!"

The fatal accents reach'd the listening crowd,
Sorrowing the mournful tidings they relate;
"Albert is dead" they weeping cry aloud—
"Albert, whose worth deserv'd a better fate.

"May curses light on that unfeeling heart
Which could the blossom of thy youth destroy!
"No comfort may his boasted wealth impart,
"But keen repentance blast each rising joy."

Such were the words that with discordant sound
Whisper'd remorse to Anselm's wounded ear:
He felt their force; he heav'd a sigh profound,
And pitying dropp'd too late a fruitless tear.

With hasty steps he seeks the fatal height,
Anxious his yet lov'd daughter's life to save;
That injur'd daughter, once his sole delight,
Now by himself devoted to the grave.

Mean time, awaken'd by Cecilia's tears,
And the sad accent of her piercing cries,
His languid head the fainting Albert rears,
While Death's dim shadows darken o'er his eyes.

" 'Tis past, Cecilia! soon approaching death
" Shall steal thy form for ever from my view;
" Soon, soon shall I resign this mortal breath,
" And, dearer far than life, bid thee adieu.

" O grant thy dying Albert's last request,
" Be our sad fate engrav'd upon my stone;
" That, when the grave at length shall yield me rest,
" Our love may be to future ages known!

“ And thou, dear source of all my grief and joy!
“ Ne’er let my image from thy thought depart:
“ When mouldering time shall this weak frame destroy,
“ Still let me live in my Cecilia’s heart!”

Faint the last accents falter’d on his tongue;
Heavy and dim his closing eyeballs roll;
Angels of death around his spirit hung,
And opening heaven receiv’d his parting soul.

Anselm just then, with pausing steps and slow,
Had climb’d the hill, and reach’d its airy brow;
Cold round his breast the rustling breezes blow,
While birds of night sing plaintive from each bough.

Impress’d with secret horror, low he bends
O’er the sad spot where poor Cecilia lay;
Around her form his trembling arms extends,
With unknown pity fill’d and deep dismay.

He feels her hand has lost its vital heat;
He sees her balmy lips no more are red;
He finds her icy breast no longer beat;
His only child, his dear Cecilia's dead!

The wretched father rais'd his eyes to heaven,
In which alone repenting sin can trust;
Bewail'd his error, pray'd to be forgiven,
And own'd in all his ways the Almighty just.

Like lilies cropt by an untimely storm,
Fair even in death the hapless lovers lay;
Love still appear'd to animate each form,
And o'er each visage shed a brightening ray.

To both one common tomb the father gave;
And, to preserve them in immortal fame,
He rais'd a chapel o'er the sacred grave,
Which still of the Two Lovers bears the name.

EUGENIO and ELIZA.

A TALE.

FOUNDED ON FACT.

THE rising Sun had ting'd the east with gold,
And scarce a cloud obscur'd his azure reign—
(That Sun, whose fatal beams did first unfold
The dreadful scene of Naseby's sanguine plain;

Where Charles, misguided monarch, wise too late,
Saw the last efforts of his party fail;
Saw Rupert's luckless triumph * urge his fate,
And Cromwell's rising destiny prevail) —

* Prince Rupert lost this battle by pursuing the enemy too far.

When young Eliza left her lonely shed,
And wander'd pensive amid heaps of slain,
Not by a bare desire of plunder led,
But hope to sooth some dying Warrior's pain,

Though mean her parents, and obscure her lot,
Each nobler feeling to her heart was known;
And, though the humble inmate of a cot,
Her form and mind had grac'd the proudest throne,

But hopeless passion o'er each opening grace
Had cast a tender, melancholy air;
Eliza lov'd a youth of noble race,
And from the first she languish'd in despair,

Twelve months had pass'd since o'er Eugenio's form
With fond surprise her wondring eyes had stray'd;
But, while his charms her artless bosom warm,
By him unnoted pass'd the blooming maid,

From that sad hour a stranger to repose,
She shunn'd the wake, she shunn'd the festive green;
And still where'er Affliction calls she goes,
A pale attendant at each mournful scene.

At every step with horror she recoil'd,
While her moist eyes the dreadful carnage view'd
Of hostile kindred upon kindred pil'd,
And British fields with British blood imbu'd.

But as, advancing o'er the dismal field
Where devastation sadden'd all around,
She view'd those lids in endless darkness seal'd,
And heard of dying groans the plaintive sound—

A form of grace superior drew her eyes,
Bending to view the Warrior's face she stood;
O fatal sight! her lov'd Eugenio lies
On earth extended, and deform'd with blood,

Struck at the view, awhile in silent grief
She stood, nor yet a sigh confess'd her pain;
Nor yet her bursting tears could bring relief,
While her chill blood ran cold through every vein.

At length, adown her cheek and snowy breast
The pearly tears in quick succession ran;
And with a voice by sorrow half suppress'd,
In broken accents, thus the fair began:

“ O thou, whom lovely and belov'd in vain,
“ Unpitying Fate has snatch'd in early bloom,
“ Is this the meed thy patriot virtues gain?
“ Dearer than life, is this thy hapless doom?

“ When last I saw thee, o'er thy manly cheek
“ Health's orient glow a mantling lustre cast;
“ Enamour'd Glory seem'd thy paths to seek,
“ Fortune in thee her favourite child embrac'd.

“ Now cold on earth thou liest—no weeping friend
“ With pious tears receiv'd thy parting breath;
“ No kindred round thy bleeding corse attend,
“ With grief like mine to mourn thy early death.

“ Ah! what avail'd the virtues of thy youth,
“ The mind that dar'd Rebellion's fury brave,
“ Thy constant loyalty, thy matchless truth?
“ Those very virtues sunk thee to the grave.”

Kneeling as thus she spoke, his hand she press'd,
And view'd his form with every charm replete:
But what emotions fill'd her raptur'd breast
When still she found his languid pulses beat!

Some neighbouring peasants led by chance that way,
Touch'd by the sorrows of the weeping fair,
With pitying eyes the fainting youth survey,
And to Eliza's well-known cottage bear.

There, with a Leech's care, her hands applied
Some lenient herbs to every rankling wound;
Herbs, by the test of long experience tried,
Of sovereign virtue in each trial found.

While anxious Love its lavish care supplies,
Eugenio's face resumes a fresher hue;
And on the maid he fix'd his opening eyes,
While tears of joy her polish'd cheeks bedew.

The dawn of gratitude, and wonder join'd,
With varying thoughts distract his labouring breast;
And, anxious to relieve his dubious mind,
In faltering words he thus the fair address:

"O say, what friend, solicitous to save,
"Procur'd for me your hospitable care?"
"For, when at Naseby the last sigh I gave,
"Nor Friendship nor Humanity was there."

Blushing, the maid with downcast looks replied,

“ To Heaven alone thy gratitude is due :

“ That God, whose Angels round the good preside,

“ To thy relief my feeble succour drew.

“ I found thee senseless 'mid a heap of slain ;

“ I bore thee here, and heaven thy life has spar'd :

“ That life restor'd, I ask nor thanks nor gain ;

“ A virtuous action is its own reward.”

With mute surprise th' attentive youth admir'd,

'Mid scenes so rude, a form so passing fair ;

But more he wonder'd, when by heaven inspir'd,

Her words bespoke a guardian angel's care.

And every day new beauties caught his view,

And every hour new virtues charm'd his mind,

Till admiration into passion grew,

By pure esteem and gratitude refin'd.

In vain, to change the purpose of his heart,
Ambition frown'd contemptuous on the maid;
Pride urg'd him from her humble cot to part,
And martial ardour call'd him from the shade.

He saw his country, in subjection led,
Pay servile homage to a zealot's nod,
Who sternly claim'd his captive Sovereign's head,
And thought by anarchy to serve his God.

He knew his single efforts would be vain,
His Prince from factious thousands to support,
And scorn'd to mingle with the abject train
Who, led by interest, swell'd a guilty Court.

Since Virtue's cause no more his arms could claim,
And hope of conquest could no longer move,
Fix'd, he resolves to wed the beauteous dame,
And consecrate his future life to love.

Fast by the cot a spreading linden grew,
Whose boughs o'ershadow'd a fantastic seat,
Where the pale primrose and the violet blue
Breath'd from the verdant turf a mingled sweet.

There, with Eliza often by his side,
Eugenio shun'd the scorching heats of noon;
Amid Night's stillness there he often bied,
And solitary watch'd the silver moon.

Perusing there the philosophic page,
Untir'd the livelong day he would remain,
Or for the Poet quit the graver Sage,
And raptur'd glance through Fancy's airy reign.

Beneath the branches of this silent shade,
By hours of past tranquility endear'd,
He vow'd his passion to the blushing maid,
Whose timid love his loss each moment fear'd.

Untaught in the pernicious schools of Art,
Which curb the genuine feelings as they rise,
She own'd the sentiments that fill'd a heart
Whose conscious purity contemn'd disguise;

The sacred rites perform'd, with festive state:
To his high dome Eugenio led the fair:
'Mid lofty woods arose the ancient seat,
Whose solid grandeur time could not impair.

There unperceiv'd life's current flow'd away,
Nor could old age their constant love destroy;
And often they deplor'd, yet bless'd that day,
To others source of grief, to them of joy.

They liv'd to see the artful Cromwell die,
And from their transient power his offspring driven,
And then beheld th' imperial dignity
Once more to the inglorious Stuarts given.

Charles they survey'd, in luxury, and ease,
And sensual pleasures pass life's ill-spent day ;
And bigot James an injur'd nation raise,
Then coward shun the battle's dread array.

Next Nassau, crown'd by policy and arms,
In early youth for matchless prudence known,
Unmov'd in dangers, fearless in alarms,
With royal Mary shar'd the British throne.

Last Anna's prosperous reign in age they view'd,
And Marlborough glorious from Germania's war—
Marlborough for councils as for fight endu'd,
Who with his own spread England's fame afar :

Then, pleas'd their country's triumphs to behold,
In youthful verdure while her laurels bloom,
Their aged lids in Death's soft sleep they fold,
And not unwilling sink into the tomb.

THE

CHILD OF SORROW.

As 'mid romantic Vecta's paths I stray'd,
Where clear Medina* rolls its silver wave,
Beneath a solitary willow's shade,
Whose pendant boughs the lucid waters lave,

A Child of Sorrow caught my wandering eye;
Loose her attire, dishevell'd was her hair,
Pallid her cheek, and oft a bursting sigh
Proclaim'd her breast the dwelling of Despair.

* The name of a river in the Isle of Wight.

Yet peerless beauty with unconquer'd sway
Resistless shone in her neglected form,
As the effulgence of the god of day
Gleams through the darkness of the wintry storm.

Oft o'er the waves she cast a wistful view,
As oft the torrent of her tears did flow;
Then to the shore her streaming eyes withdrew,
And in disorder'd words thus spoke her woe:

" Dash, dash, ye waves, against the sounding shore,
" Your rage no longer can my bosom move;
" Louder ye winds, and yet still louder roar,
" You can no more destroy my only love.

" Victim of sorrow from the dawn of life,
" I can no more admit new joy or grief;
" Perfidious Fortune, freed from all thy strife,
" Even in despair my soul shall find relief."

Touch'd with compassion at these plaintive sounds,

Slow I approach'd, and to the stranger said ;

“ What deep afflictions cause such heart-felt wounds ?

“ What storms of Fortune bow thy youthful head ?

“ Could I alleviate ? ” — “ Never,” she replied,

“ Can human power my mind from anguish save ; —

“ Never, oh ! never can my woes subside,

“ But 'mid the shadows of the darksome grave.

“ Yet since soft Pity seems to touch thy heart,

“ And the big tear stands trembling in thine eye,

“ The story of my grief I will impart,

“ Then leave me to my hapless destiny.

“ Where proud Augusta rears her lofty head,

“ My childhood pass'd in affluence and ease :

“ Far from my paths the train of Sorrow fled,

“ While gay I bask'd in Fortune's brightest blaze.

“ But short those joys; for scarce had fifteen years
“ Taught me my happiness to know and prize,
“ When swift the splendid vision disappears,
“ And pale Adversity's dun clouds arise.

“ Misfortunes unforeseen depriv'd my sire
“ In little time of his abounding wealth;
“ To highest views accusom'd to aspire,
“ He lost his wonted chearfulness and health.

“ I saw Despair o'ercast his manly brow,
“ While silent Grief sat rankling at his breast;
“ I saw his head with Disappointment bow,
“ Till an untimely death restored his rest.

“ Long time I mourn'd—nor did I mourn alone—
“ A virtuous mother shar'd in all my woe;
“ A husband, and a father we bemoan,
“ And for his loss our tears alternate flow.

“ But Time, whose lenient hand can oft assuage
“ The sharpest wounds of unrelenting Fate,
“ Had soften’d by degrees Affliction’s rage
“ To fond Remembrance and Concern sedate.

“ Together we forsook the venal crowd,
“ And in this island found a still retreat,
“ Far from the gay, the thoughtless, and the proud,
“ For Poverty and Resignation meet.

“ Contented here we liv’d, nor e’er repin’d
“ At memory of what we once possess’d;
“ But grateful own’d, that the unsullied mind
“ In its own conscious rectitude is blest.

“ Hard by our cottage, on a rising ground,
“ In simple state Ardelio’s mansion stood—
“ Ardelio lov’d by all the country round,
“ Friend to the poor, the artless, and the good.

“ Large was his fortune, liberal his heart,
“ Faultless his manners, undefil'd his mind;
“ Free from ambition, avarice, or art,
“ His only study was to serve mankind.

“ By chance conducted to our lone abode,
“ He found me friendless, pitied me, and lov'd:
“ His bounteous hand a quick relief bestow'd,
“ And soon each trace of indigence remov'd.

“ The day was fix'd, when at the sacred shrine
“ Attested Heaven should hear our mutual vows;
“ And sprightly Pleasure seem'd once more to twine
“ Her freshest roses for my favour'd brows.

“ But, ah! those roses bloom'd but to decay;
“ For, like the bud before the eastern wind,
“ Their beauties faded immature away,
“ But fading left a lasting thorn behind,

“ Oblig’d to leave me for a little space,
“ Presaging tears his fatal absence mourn;
“ But the kind youth, my rising grief to chase,
“ At parting promis’d he would soon return.

“ Mean time a fever’s unremitting rage
“ Invaded all my parent’s trembling frame;
“ No remedy its fury can assuage,
“ Her frantic cries in vain my succour claim.

“ A thousand times I kiss’d her pallid cheek,
“ And with my tears bedew’d her burning hand,
“ While with officious care I vainly seek
“ Those cures which unavailing Science plann’d.

“ Clasp’d in these arms she died: no friend was near,
“ In whom this sad, this breaking heart could trust,
“ When I beheld her on the sable bier,
“ And heard the solemn sentence, Dust to dust!

“ Frantic with sorrow, to the rocky shore
“ With an uncertain course my steps I bend :
“ Unheeded round me the deep thunders roar,
“ And the blue lightning’s lurid flames descend.

“ Yet one dread object my attention drew :
“ Near the rude cliffs a vessel I espied,
“ And heard the clamours of its frightened crew,
“ Who vainly tried to stem the billowy tide.

“ For, by the fury of the tempest tost,
“ Against the rocks its severing planks rebound ;
“ The floating wreck is driv’n towards the coast,
“ With seamen’s lifeless bodies scatter’d round.

“ New anguish seiz’d my grief-devoted mind :
“ While I survey’d the horrors of the storm,
“ I thought, perhaps even now, to death consign’d,
“ Floats ’mid those waves my lov’d Ardelio’s form.

" Pierc'd with the thought, adown the craggy steep

" I hasten to explore the fatal strand ;

" Just then, emerging from the raging deep,

" A breathless corse is thrown upon the sand.

" Shuddering I look with half averted eye—

" Ah me, my dread forebodings were too true!—"

She paus'd—then utter'd, with a bursting sigh,

" Ardelio's torn for ever from my view!"

OSMOND and MATILDA.

A TALE.

WHERE Avon rolls his winding flood,
Where Clifton's summits rise,
Whose rich expanse of lawn and wood
Delights our wondering eyes.

Earl Raymond's castle once arose,
The glory of the plain—
Raymond, the terror of his foes,
Of countless conquests vain.

There young Matilda's beauty bloom'd
Unenvied, unadmir'd,
Who ne'er the pride of courts assum'd,
Or life of courts desir'd.

Her brother in these peaceful bowers
Had left the lovely maid,
To pass her solitary hours,
While he far distant stray'd—

Where Superstition's stern command
Call'd all her sons to arms,
And bore to Judah's distant land
Destruction and alarms—

Where pure Religion's injur'd name
Induc'd each hostile lord,
In her defence, to seek for fame,
And wield the vengeful sword.

While Raymond hop'd, by blood and war,
To gain eternal bliss,
Matilda, from dissensions far,
Made sure of happiness,

By gentlest manners, purest truth,
By piety refin'd;
For priestcraft ne'er misled her youth,
Or sway'd her juster mind.

She knew a dying Saviour bought
Redemption by his blood:
The hope which Mercy gave, she sought
By mercy to make good.

For she could injuries forgive,
Could weep o'er fallen foes;
Whate'er his faith, she could receive
The stranger to repose.

'Mid Clifton's vales, her spotless life
To contemplation given,
Secure from public noise and strife,
Her thoughts were fix'd on Heaven.

Matilda, shall a breast like thine
Feel Love's pernicious sway?
Canst thou that holy calm resign,
Through Passion's wilds to stray?

Celestial Powers, unite to save
Perfection like your own!
O let not Love that heart enslave,
Where Reason fix'd her throne!

Ah, fruitless prayer! No pitying power
Averts Matilda's woes:
They rather urge the fateful hour,
That robs her of repose!

As near an ancient forest's bounds
Matilda chanc'd to stray,
The sprightly noise of horns and hounds
Salutes the rising day.

The virgin sees a glittering train
With shouts attend the chase :
So light their horses scour the plain,
She scarce their steps can trace.

One she beholds excel the rest
In form and manly grace,
Whose noble air, not splendid vest,
Mark'd his distinguish'd race.

While with delight Matilda view'd
The stranger as he pass'd,
While her pleas'd eyes his form pursu'd,
And fear'd each look the last,

She sees his horse no longer own
Obedience to the rein :
She sees the youthful hunter thrown
Extended on the plain !

Though Prudence with contracted mind
Advis'd her to retreat,
With Admiration Pity join'd,
Urg'd on her rapid feet :

To where the lately festive crowd
In tears surround their lord,
And beat their breasts, and cry aloud,
While none relief afford.

Matilda with compassion view'd
The stranger as he lay :
Softer sensations soon ensu'd,
And made her breast their prey.

For Pity's unsuspected charm
Has oft seduc'd a heart,
Where brightest beauty could not warm,
Nor wisdom love impart.

"Can Sorrow's ineffectual tear,"
She cried, "to life restore?
While yet his spirit lingers here,
Celestial aid implore.

"Nor yet supinely wait, that Heaven
A miracle may grant;
For seldom aid divine is given]
Where human efforts faint.

"Imbosom'd in yon towering wood
An ancient castle stands:
Earl Raymond there, the brave, the good,
Possess'd these happy lands.

“ But since from Britain’s shore he ’s gone,
“ Through Asia’s realms to stray,
“ These smiling lands I rule alone,
“ And all my power obey.

“ There then your dying master lead
“ With care along the plain;
“ For never did Misfortune plead
“ At Raymond’s gate in vain.”

The tear of gratitude sincere
From every eye-lid falls:
Their lord his fad attendants bear
Within the castle’s walls,

There soon Matilda’s tender care
His banish’d sense restor’d:
But who to thee, incautious fair,
Shall now relief afford?

For treacherous Passion every day
Still deeper sunk the dart;
And, while she thought 't was Pity's sway,
Love reign'd o'er all her heart.

At length the fatal truth was known;
The stranger own'd his flame:
How great her joy! How quickly flown,
At hearing Osmond's name!

From her pale cheeks the roses fled,
Tears trembled in her eye;
Pensive she hung her beauteous head
While sigh succeeded sigh.

"Osmond," she cried, "this love withstand;
To other maids incline;
Nor fondly hope Matilda's hand
Shall e'er be join'd with thine.

“ Between our race the deadly strife,

“ O Osmond! need I tell—

“ How by thy sire, in prime of life,

“ My hapless father fell?

“ And can I swear eternal love

“ Where Raymond vows revenge?

“ I might—but Raymond ne’er can prove,

“ In love or hate, a change.

“ Then cease to feed a fruitless flame

“ My heart must ne’er return;

“ Nor of that heart the coldness blame—

“ For thine ’twill ever mourn.”

“ O fatal accents,” Osmond cries,

“ That blast my promis’d joys!

“ Say not, Matilda, that you prize

“ The heart, your scorn destroys.

“ Yet, if not Pity’s voice, nor Love,
“ Can change my stern decree,
“ Still Piety perhaps may move
“ That breast to feel for me.

“ We ’re taught how much by power divine
“ We need to be forgiven;
“ That if to pardon we decline,
“ We lose our promis’d heaven.

“ Cold lies my father’s honour’d clay;
“ With life resentment ’s fled:
“ Shall then Matilda’s breast betray
“ Fixt hatred for the dead?

“ His closing eyes wept Seward’s fate:
“ Be then thy pardon won;
“ Nor in the crime he mourn’d too late
“ Involve his guiltless son.”—

When Passion courts the youthful ear,
How weak is Reason's voice !
Delusion to the heart how dear,
When it confirms its choice!

Matilda's passion was so strong,
She wish'd to be deceiv'd ;
And every word from Osmond's tongue
Was instantly believ'd.

But still she hid her fatal flame,
Still urg'd a father's death ;
When the sad news to Osmond came,
That Edith's parting breath

In dying accents call'd her son
Her blessing to receive—
And said his presence could alone
Take terror from the grave.

His feeling heart in Edith's pain
Entirely lost its own ;
Her sufferings rack each filial vein,
And all the lover 's flown.

He press'd Matilda's trembling hands,
And scarcely bid adieu :
Speechless and pale Matilda stands,
Till he 's no more in view.

Then wild through Clifton's tufted groves
She calls on Osmond's name ;
Sighs to the gale their hapless loves—
Those sighs but fan the flame.

" No more," she cries, " shall I behold
" His eyes serenely gay !
" No more his hand my hand shall hold,
" As through these vales I stray !

“ Osmond, return, my mind from pride

“ And prejudice is free :

“ Though by thy father Seward died,

“ Matilda lives for thee.

“ In pity come, my peace restore,

“ For thee alone I prize :

“ Fruitless entreaties ! never more

“ Shall Osmond bless these eyes !”—

Twelve times had Cynthia's silver beam

 Illumin'd Clifton's height ;

Twelve times had shed on Avon's stream

 Its inoffensive light :

Still victim of a hopeless fire,

 Matilda pin'd away ;

The roses from her cheeks retire,

 Her health, her charms decay.

Her heavy eyes, with fruitless care,
Still turn'd towards the place,
Where fill'd with anguish and despair,
She last saw Osmond's face.

At length, upon the opening plain,
Advancing from afar,
She sees a weary, pallid train,
Sad relics of the war.

High o'er the rest, his towering form,
His firm intrepid air,
That seem'd to brave Misfortune's storm,
Announc'd her brother near.

Through dark affliction's chilling cloud
A ray of pleasure warms :
"Raymond's return'd!" she cries aloud,
And hastes into his arms.

“ Say, dearest brother, only friend!

“ Shall Glory’s voice no more

“ Call thee in wars thy youth to spend,

“ Far from thy native shore?

“ Ah! trust not Glory’s dangerous charms,

“ Who smiles but to betray;

“ But, free from tumults and alarms,

“ Enjoy life’s fleeting day.”

“ Belov’d Matilda, never more

“ I’ll tempt the inconstant wave;

“ No longer quit my native shore,

“ Or dearer sister leave.

“ For her shall friendship’s milder joys

“ Exert their winning power,

“ Whilst Hymen’s more endearing ties

“ Shall gild her latest hour.”—

“ No, Raymond, never shall my tongue

“ Pronounce the solemn vow ;

“ Nor e'er, the sacred rites among,

“ At Hymen's shrine I'll bow.

“ From worldly joy, from worldly care,

“ Still may my mind be free!

“ Still every hour that heaven can spare,

“ May I devote to thee !”

“ A virtuous passion's spotless flame

“ Heaven ne'er can disapprove :

“ Your hand I've promis'd, and I claim

“ As token of your love.

“ When near Britannia's rocky shore

“ Wild rag'd the bursting storm,

“ Loud o'er the deck the billows roar,

“ While clouds the skies deform.

“ In vain the pilot's trembling hand
“ Attempts the stern to guide,
“ To turn us from the dangerous land,
“ And tempt once more the tide.

“ The winds blew high, the surges swell'd,
“ Our masts, our cordage lost ;
“ The shatter'd ship 's at length impell'd
“ On Devon's hilly coast.

“ Scarce twenty of my faithful train
“ Escape the dangerous wave ;
“ The rest tir'd, struggling on the main,
“ Find there a watery grave.

“ With pain we climb the steepy height,
“ And reach a level mead,
“ When o'er the earth the dewy night
“ Had cast her sable shade.

“ Beneath a lime-tree’s sheltering arms
“ Our weary limbs we lay;
“ And hope, secure from all alarms,
“ To wait the approach of day.

“ But vain our hopes; for when calm rest
“ Had seal’d each heavy eye,
“ And lull’d to peace each anxious breast,
“ A cruel band drew nigh.

“ They seiz’d our arms, they bound our hands,
“ Whilst fearless all repos’d;
“ And soon in everlasting bands
“ Of sleep our eyes had clos’d,

“ Had not, by Mercy’s high decree,
“ A stranger pass’d that way,
“ Endu’d with force to set us free,
“ And all our foes to slay.

“ My stubborn soul, which ne’er to power
“ Or sordid riches bow’d,
“ With humblest gratitude that hour
“ Its lavish thanks bestow’d.

“ Those thanks repeated o’er and o’er,
“ My lineage I declar’d,
“ And ask’d if Raymond’s boundless store
“ Such service could reward.

“ A crimson blush at Raymond’s name
“ The stranger’s cheeks o’erspread,
“ And from his agitated frame
“ Its wonted vigour fled.”

“ Raymond,”—he cried—with faltering voice,
“ Thy riches I resign :
“ If in vain wealth I could rejoice,
“ Unnumber’d wealth is mine.

“ But all the wealth the sordid prize

“ Or power the vain desire,

“ My towering wishes can despise,

“ And higher far aspire.

“ If to my pure unsullied flame

“ You would Matilda grant,

“ No other riches shall I claim,

“ No greater treasure want.”

“ Pleas'd with the ardent, generous love,

“ Which, scorning meaner views,

“ Matilda only could approve,

“ Matilda only choose—

“ I promis'd, ere to-morrow's sun

“ Shall gild the evening tide,

“ Thou shouldst, by my entreaties won,

“ Consent to be his bride.

“ And cold indeed must be thy heart,
“ And blind must be thine eye,
“ Whene’er he shall his suit impart,
“ Couldst thou that suit deny.

“ Then drive, Matilda, from thy brow
“ Each vestige of despair;
“ A brother’s wish, a lover’s vow,
“ To crown at once prepare.”—

To Raymond’s harsh commands the maid
Nor sigh nor tear return’d;
But, sorrowing, low she bow’d her head,
And silently she mourn’d.

Now Cynthia o’er the azure sky
Her starry mantle throws;
Around the world light visions fly,
To soften human woes.

But no delusive, flattering dream,
Which grants a short relief,
Led by soft slumber, kindly came
To sooth Matilda's grief.

Supinely on her couch reclin'd,
Prest by a weight of care,
No more her weak, distemper'd mind
Could comfort find in prayer.

Affection, Duty, strongly plad
Her constant heart to move:
Firm in their cause that heart can bleed,
But cannot cease to love.

Now in the east with blushing pride
The purple morning rose,
And Health, with Labour by her side,
Starts from a light repose.

Matilda from her chamber hies,
All spiritless and weak;
Despair sits lowering in her eyes,
And sickens on her cheek.

The mead and garden's rich perfume
No more her steps delay,
But through the forest's awful gloom,
She bends her devious way.

There, as immers'd in grief profound
Through pathless wilds she treads,
The deadly nightshade all around
Its baneful berries spreads.

The fatal plant Matilda view'd,
Then touch'd with trembling hand;
And Faith with Reason now subdued,
Left Grief entire command.

Now her pale lips the berries stain,
Which eagerly she rends;
And now through every freezing vein
Their poisonous juice descends.

Raymond, who long with fruitless haste
Sought the devoted fair,
Now sees her in the desert waste,
Reclin'd with pensive air.

“Matilda, why this long delay?
“Why these dejected eyes?
“Why this disorder'd loose array?
“Thy lover waits,” he cries.—

“Raymond, I haste,” the maid replied,
“Thy promise to fulfil,
“And follow wheresoe'er you guide,
“Obedient to your will.—”

Now from the solitary wood
With rapid steps they turn'd,
To where an ancient chapel stood,
Where Seward lay inurn'd.

Before the venerable pile,
With reverential fear
And beating breasts, they paus'd awhile,
And shed a filial tear.

Now entering with averted eyes,
This hated lord to meet,
Matilda sees with wild surprise
Her Osmond at her feet.

Just then the poison's subtle power
Invades its trembling prey ;
She sinks upon the marble floor,
Cold as her kindred clay.

Osmond, with anguish and affright,
Bends o'er the dying maid,
And sees from all that charm'd his sight
The living lustre fade.

"Matilda, 'tis thy Osmond calls,
"O bless him with a smile;
"With one kind look, ere yet he falls,
"His misery beguile."—

At his lov'd name she op'd her eyes,
And rais'd her languid head;
"Osmond, dear youth?" she faintly cries,
"I hasten to the dead.

"A poison on my vitals preys,
"And withers all my bloom;
"The rapid flood of life delays,
"And calls me to the tomb.

“ Yet, Osmond, though we soon must part—

“ From other contracts free,

“ To the last gasp this lingering heart

“ Shall fondly dwell with thee.—

More had she said, but envious Death

Assum'd its iron sway :

Faint, and more faint, her struggling breath

Entirely dies away.

Whilst Raymond, fill'd with vain remorse,

To view his victim fears,

Osmond bedews her senseless corse

With unavailing tears.

He cries, “ Belov'd Matilda, wait,

“ Nor yet thy Osmond leave—

“ Who hastens to partake thy fate,

“ And join thee in the grave.

“ Now, Edith, to thy hapless son
“ Those mournful duties give,
“ You hop’d, when life’s sad race was run,
“ From him you might receive.

“ May piety thy woes assuage!
“ Nor let my early doom
“ Depress thy weak, declining age
“ Untimely to the tomb!—”

While duty and affection warm
Thus his last thoughts inspir’d,
He press’d Matilda’s lifeless form,
And, bow’d by grief, expir’d.

GERTRUDE.

“ ARISE, kind Sun! with brighter rays
“ Illumine all the grove;
“ Tune every voice to grateful praise,
“ To harmony and love.

“ Give to the pink a fresher die,
“ New sweetness to the rose;
“ Let jessamine with lilies vie,
“ And rival charms oppose.

“ The gaudy pink shall lose its pride,
“ Compar'd to Henry's cheek;
“ The lily its dull whiteness hide,
“ A browner hue to take.

" But not the charms of shape or face

" Have caus'd a transient love:

" Such passions with each youthful grace

" Shall suddenly remove.

" 'Tis honour binds my lasting chain,

" 'Tis goodness wins my heart;

" 'Tis pity that feels mental pain

" From every sufferer's smart.

" 'Tis Virtue's self, to gain the mind,

" My Henry's form, assumes:

" Virtue, with beauty there combin'd,

" In bright perfection blooms.

" To-day the indissoluble knot

" Shall be by Hymen tied,

" When happy Gertrude's envied lot

" Shall make her Henry's bride."—

GERTRUDE.

The gentle Gertrude quick arose,
Her busy maids attend :
The richest robes with care they chose,
The richest gems commend.

But Gertrude, scorning foreign aid,
Is clad in simple white ;
She shuns the pomp and vain parade
Which vulgar eyes delight.

Her auburn hair falls unconfin'd
But by a myrtle crown ;
Her veil flows loosely in the wind,
And low her robe hangs down.

She now ascends a lofty tower,
To see if Henry's near :
Far as the eye extends its power,
She seeks for Henry there.

No Henry glads her longing eye,
No festive throng advance;
No maidens flowerets strew hard by,
Or lead the lively dance.

The glowing crimson leaves her cheek,
A deadly pale succeeds:
Her Henry still resolv'd to seek,
She wanders o'er the meads.

She sought him through the cypress grove,
She sought him o'er the plain;
Sad by the crystal stream did rove,
The woodland search'd in vain.

Whilst anxious thus she view'd around
To find her promis'd lord,
She sees him breathless on the ground,
Pierc'd by his rival's sword.

Around his neck she throws her arms,
Her lips to his are join'd;
Sure Gertrude's lips have potent charms
To animate the mind!

But Henry's frozen heart no more
Can transport feel or pain:
The voice that gave delight before,
Now calls the youth in vain.

Clos'd are those eyes that beam'd so bright,
His rosy bloom is fled;
In happier climes, in purer light,
He joins the tranquil dead.

Distraction seiz'd the wretched maid:
With agony oppress'd,
Frantic she grasp'd the sanguine blade
That gor'd her Henry's breast.

The fatal sword perform'd too well,
It pierc'd her tender side;
Without a sigh fair Gertrude fell,
And by her Henry died.

SEMIRA.

“ **T**RANQUILITY, celestial maid,
“ Why hast thou fled my troubled breast?
“ Vainly must I implore thine aid,
“ And only hope in Death for rest?

“ I once was thy peculiar care,
“ In infancy and early youth;
“ The victim now of blank Despair,
“ I see thy smiles are void of truth.

“ Only to sharpen Sorrow’s dart,
“ Deceitful friend, you smil’d on me:
“ But, since you scorn my proffer’d heart,
“ That heart no more shall plead to thee.

“ But I’ll invoke thee, gentle Death !
“ Thou, certain cure for every pain,
“ Shall tell me at my latest breath,
“ Our sorrows as our joys are vain.

“ Come, then, kind soother of my woes,
“ Prepare for me the welcome grave :
“ On its cold lap I’ll find repose,
“ Which living I can never have.—

Thus mourn’d Semira, hapless fair,
By Disappointment’s stings oppress’d :
The pitying Power receiv’d her prayer,
And life forsook her woe-worn breast.

ON

RETURNING TO IRELAND,

IN MAY, M DCC LXXXVIII.

WELCOME once more, my native land!
What joy to breathe the perfum'd gale,
Which, as immers'd in thought I stand,
Salutes me from the hawthorn vale!

O Solitude! of mind serene,
Parent of Innocence and Peace,
Preside for ever o'er this scene,
Nor let this grateful silence cease!

I've left the gayer paths of life,
Where Reason ne'er could Pleasure find,
Where ever restless, busy Strife
Leaves look'd-for Happiness behind.

There Flattery o'er my youthful cheek
Has spread a momentary glow ;
There Vanity has made me seek
The gilded roofs of hidden Woe:

There have I seen neglected Worth,
Abash'd, decline her honest head,
While Vice in gaudy robes came forth,
By Pride and Adulation led.

There Envy steeps the poison'd dart,
To strike at Merit's open breast ;
There smooth, insinuating Art
Deceives the wisest and the best.

The Nobles, who were wont to raise,
To Liberty a spotless shrine,
To Av'rice now devote their days,
For her unhallo'd garlands twine.

The gentle Virgin, who of yore
Thought Worth and Happiness the same,
Contemns what she rever'd before,
And Truth she calls an empty name.

The Beauty, whom relentless Time
Has robb'd of every boasted grace,
Retains the follies of her prime,
And decks with borrow'd bloom her face.

But say, amid such scenes as these,
Can I still hope my mind was free?
Say, in this more than Cretan maze,
Was I devoted still to thee?

Did ne'er Ambition swell my breast,
Or sparkle in my dazzled eye?
Did ne'er offended Pride molest
My hours, or prompt the heaving sigh?

Yes: I have felt their baneful power,
Have own'd their universal sway,
Was tempted in one thoughtless hour
Their shameful dictates to obey.

But Reason rais'd my fainting soul,
Ere I the magic draught could sip;
Ere I had touch'd the Syren's bowl,
She turn'd it from my eager lip.

Amoret, she cried, for ever leave
This scene where Vice and Folly reign;
The time you 've lost in crowds retrieve,
Nor hope for bliss but on the plain.—

With this kind counsel I complied,
No longer worldly splendor prize ;
Nor shall I build my nobler pride
But on becoming good and wise,

Accept then, Solitude, my prayer,
A wearied wanderer receive ;
Strengthen'd by thee, I will prepare
By spotless virtue for the grave.

ON LEAVING

LEHENA, IN IRELAND,

IN OCTOBER, M DCC LXXXVIII.

DEAR fields, where oft in infancy I stray'd,
When every trifle charms the vacant mind!
Kind groves, that wrapp'd me in your circling shade,
When thoughtful Science first my soul refin'd!

Say, must I bid this lov'd recess adieu,
Once more to float on Dissipation's tide?
Where shall I meet with friends so safe, so true,
To whom I may my careless youth confide?

Where yon tall elms have form'd a dark retreat,
How oft the flowers of April did I shun!
Beneath the limes that overhang yon seat,
How sweet my shelter from the summer sun!

Or when rude Boreas urg'd the chilling blast,
And desolation darken'd all the plain,
Musing I wander'd o'er the wintry waste,
And knew my charms more transient and more vain:

For soon again shall Phœbus' golden beams
Restore the meadows to their pristine bloom:
But not his brightest, nor his warmest gleams,
Can wake my slumbering ashes from the tomb—

Till the last trumpet with terrific sound
Shall call the trembling culprit to appear,
Where perfect Justice shall my guilt confound,
Or endless Mercy ease my anxious fear.

When'er the inclement 'skies compell'd my stay
Within the walls of yon sequester'd dome,
How very short appear'd each sullen day,
While o'er the storied page my eyes did roam!

Or when, exchanging books for free discourse,
A Parent's words instructed as they pleas'd,
While to her words her actions gave new force,
My mind example more than precept rais'd.

She taught me humbled goodness to revere,
To cheer the sad, to succour the forlorn;
Taught me to think bright Virtue only fair,
And senseless Pride to treat with equal scorn.

Sometimes the Friendly Sisters* too would come,
Their conduct blameless, and their souls sincere,
Adding new pleasure to our peaceful home,
For heaven-born Friendship can each scene endear.

* Relations of the Writer,

But now no more Maria glads our eyes,
No more with her the verdant fields we tread:
Med'cine in vain its healing virtue tries;
Our lov'd Maria's number'd with the dead!

Yet, Anna, cease this unavailing tear,
Utter no more that deep heart-rending sigh:
Maria's body wastes upon the bier;
Maria's purer soul can never die.

Methinks, she views you now with tender care,
She drops a tear of pity to your woe:
Ah! then, your sainted Sister's quiet spare,
Who can no sorrow now but Anna's know.

Alas! while I indulge the pensive strain,
Apollo sinks into the lap of Night:
When he illumines next yon western plain,
No more this lawn shall open to my sight,

Stay, envious Cynthia, suffer yet one view!

To-morrow I these blissful meads forsake;
From her moist veil she shakes the silver dew,
Deaf to each feeble accent that I speak.

Then farewell each regretted, rural scene,

Each rising tree my careful hand has nurs'd!
Long may your branches crown this happy green,
When these frail limbs lie mouldering in the dust!

WRITTEN

AT STEEPHILL COTTAGE,

IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT,

AUGUST, M DCC XC.

WHAT joy, escaping from the restless throng
Who in Augusta* waste their trifling day,
To wander, Vecta†, thy wild rocks among,
Or careless o'er thy airy summits stray!

Or musing loiter in thy waving groves,
Or mark thy limpid streamlets as they flow;
Or view thy hamlets, where mild Patience loves
To shade with olive Labour's sun-burnt brow!

* A name for London.

† The ancient name of the Isle of Wight.

Where the calm villagers content abide,
Blest in the sweets of Liberty and Peace,
Crop the luxuriant harvest's golden pride,
Or spread their nets to catch the finny race.

No wild ambition damps the genuine joys
Which bounteous Nature to her sons affords;
No keen remorse their quiet rest annoys,
Or sick disgust attends their frugal boards.

Ah! why should Fortune, with deceitful smile,
Lure free-born Britons from the rural plain,
In courts deprav'd for sordid wealth to toil,
And meanly drag a golden idiot's chain?

What numbers, Vesta, on thy sea-girt shore,
Unpractis'd in the world's pernicious strife,
Rich in simplicity, ne'er sought for more,
And clos'd where they receiv'd their blameless life!

Yet tho' thy hills no costly metals yield,
To draw oppressive Av'rice from afar,
E'en here the rustic in his native field
Has sunk beneath the iron hand of war.

When banish'd Harold* with destructive rage
Against thine Isle his vengeful fury turn'd,
What crowds, unnoted in the historic page,
Here o'er their murder'd friends in anguish mourn'd!

The dreadful scene, methinks, even now I see!
O Harold, be this cruelty abhorr'd!
Spare the low cot of helpless Poverty,
And 'gainst the powerful turn thy conquering sword.

* Harold, with his father Earl Godwin, and brother Tosti, invaded this Island when banished the kingdom.

Here amid sanguine heaps Earl Goodwin stands;
Relentless Tosti hears the suppliants cry;
Those cries restrain not the fierce victor's hands,
And the pale Islanders unpitied die.

Unhappy victims, who with fruitless prayers
To savage conquerors have sued in vain!
To avenge your wrongs, impending fate prepares
For your unfeeling foes an equal pain.

Soon civil discord, and fraternal hate,
Shall destine Tosti to an early tomb;
While madly proud, usurping regal state,
Harold on Hastings' plains shall meet his doom.

Where the insignia now of kingly pride,
The dazzling sceptre and imperial throne?
For him each vain distinction's laid aside!
Unhappy Harold*! only marks the stone.

* Harold was buried at Waltham Abbey, with this inscription only on his tomb—"Harold Infelix."

Thus shall the monarch mingle with the slave;
Thus shall the noble and ignoble meet:
Death, all-subduing, opens in the grave
To wealth and wretchedness a like retreat.

But turn, my mind, from ages long past o'er,
Far brighter prospects to thy view remain;
Vecta can dread a hostile force no more,
While England's navy triumphs o'er the main*.

Behold the warlike fleet in proud array,
Majestic moving o'er the liquid plain:
Loose to the winds their flags and streamers play,
And menace ruin to insulting Spain.

Thrice happy land, where the directing care
Of a wise Statesman† in each step we trace;
Whose active vigilance prepares for war,
E'en when reclining in the lap of Peace!

* At this time the English fleet lay off the Isle of Wight, commanded by Lord Howe.

† Our present Minister.

Long may he, Albion, near thy throne preside,
 And ne'er inconstant Fortune's falsehood prove,
 Humble the Spanish and the Gallic Pride,
 And be rewarded by his country's love !

STEEPLEHILL COLLEGE

Here pause, my Muse ! no more the theme pursue,
 Fix on the present thine enraptur'd eye :
 A brighter scene can ne'er attract thy view ;
 O, may its cheering lustre never die !

ON

LEAVING

STEEPHILL COTTAGE,

IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT;

AUGUST, M DCC XC.

YE towering hills, whose front sublime
 The misty vapour often shrouds,
 Whose summits, braving envious time,
 Aspire to pierce the vagrant clouds!

Ye trees, that to the balmy gale,
 Low murmuring, bow your verdant heads!
 Ye lavish flowers that scent the vale,
 Where rosy health delighted treads!

Ye streams, that through the meadow stray
In many a wild fantastic round,
Or, sparkling, urge your rapid way
O'er rocks with bending osiers crown'd!

Ye whitening cliffs, that o'er the main
In dreadful majesty arise,
Whose dangers to elude, in vain
Too oft the trembling sailor tries!

Each varied scene, whose native charms
Excel what Fancy ever drew,
Where, shelter'd in Retirement's arms,
Contentment sweetly rests, adieu!

And thou, romantic, straw-roof'd cot,
Whose walls are from dissension free,
The hours shall never be forgot,
The happy hours I've pass'd in thee!

Where hospitality presides,
And pours from Plenty's copious horn;
Where unaffected worth resides,
And festive mirth gilds every morn.

O may they long exert their power,
Long guard from ill this blest retreat,
And ever, through life's checquer'd hour,
With smiles of peace its owners greet!

And may no blast e'er rend yon trees;
Or spoil this garden's gaudy bloom,
But the soft shower and gentle breeze
Preserve its colour and perfume!

Ah me! I must no more delay,
For see the swelling sails in view;
The wind propitious chides my stay,
Romantic cot, again adieu!

WRITTEN
IN THE
WINTER OF MDCCXCI.

ON
BARNET FIELD.

THE northern wind howls o'er the dreary plain,
And thick and frequent fall the drifted snows ;
Pleas'd, Desolation views her waste domain,
And torpid Vegetation's dead repose.

Yet here my pensive Muse delights to stray,
And silent o'er this barren wild to tread ;
For well the prospect suits my solemn lay,
Which sings of battles and the mighty dead.

Yes, ye cold relics of what once were great,
To you alone my homage shall be paid :
I scorn to flatter living Power or State,
But bend with reverence to the Hero's shade.

Soon the gay pageants vulgar minds adore
Shall rest neglected in the lonely grave,
Where Adulation soothes their ears no more,
And Vanity no longer can enslave,

The wise and brave attends a different fate ;
Their names shall flourish to remotest time ;
Fame shall for them her golden trump inflate,
And sound their praises in each distant clime.

Then cease, ye Bards, to stoop to gilded Pride ;
On genuine Worth alone your praise bestow :
For Wealth, or Rank to Merit unallied,
Serves but the owner's littleness to show.

What slaughter once empurpled o'er this field!

Here constant Loyalty in vain expir'd:

Her sanguine votaries here Ambition steel'd,

While frantic Hate each hostile bosom fir'd.

Here princely Warwick, generous, wise, and brave,

Pour'd from unnumber'd wounds life's crimson flood:

Here dying Montague a token gave

Of love fraternal ratified in blood.

Hard fate of war! when Warwick's* rebel hand

Against his sovereign grasp'd the direful sword,

That Victory should on his banners stand,

And leave him when to Virtue's cause restor'd!

Yet let not man, presumptuous, weak, and vain,

Murmur at God's inscrutable decree—

But own, whate'er his wisdom shall ordain

Is right, though Man's too blind the cause to see.

* Warwick had just before deserted the Party of Edward IV.

By ties of blood here fickle Clarence* sway'd,
 Basely betray'd his unsuspecting Friend:
 But the transgression soon his life repaid,
 By Glo'ster doom'd to an inglorious end.

Here fainting Exeter†, by wounds oppress'd,
 Mixt with the dead, lay senseless on the plain,
 Till friendly Night outspread her sable vest,
 When his slow steps a neighbouring cottage gain.

Nor, though his ensigns‡ lost the doubtful day,
 Should Oxford§ lose the well-earn'd meed of praise;
 For long he fought, nor left the dire affray
 Till even fond Hope withdrew its latest rays;

* Clarence had deserted Warwick in this battle.

† The Duke of Exeter.

‡ The battle was lost by Oxford's ensigns being mistaken for those of the enemy.

§ The Earl of Oxford, a chief commander: he led the van also of Richmond's army.

Then fled with Somerset to Tewksbury's plain,
To join unwearied Margaret's hostile bands:
But all thy courage, Somerset* is vain,
Whose life relentless Destiny demands.

A doom less rigorous was thine, De Vere†
For, deeply though you drank the cup of woe,
At length you saw, reliev'd from every fear,
The tyrant Richard's blood at Bosworth flow.

To march victorious o'er this plain‡ was thine,
Where first severest Fortune you had known,
And to behold the great Lancastrian line
Once more securely plac'd on Albion's throne.

* The Duke of Somerset, afterwards slain at Tewksbury.

† The name of the Oxford family.

‡ After the battle of Bosworth.

But in what plaintive accents shall my Muse;
Unhappy Henry, weep thy lorn estate?
What heart to thee compassion could refuse?
For thy meek virtues ill deserv'd thy fate.

When the sad tidings reach'd thine anxious ear
Of Warwick slain, thy brightest hopes undone,
Did not thy mind presage new anguish near,
Thy captive princess, and thy murder'd son?

Did not prophetic Fancy paint the steel
By Glo'ster pointed to thy harmless breast,
Design'd by Heaven thy sharper woes to heal,
And grant thee long-lost liberty and rest?

Far different hopes deceitful Fortune gave,
Whose brightest influence shone upon thy birth,
When, form'd each adverse nation to enslave,
Thy warlike sire adorn'd the wondering earth;

When happy England bless'd his equal sway,
And Gallia's sceptre fill'd his conquering hand.
How chang'd thy prospect at life's parting ray !
A bleeding captive in thy native land !

Thus Goodness infinite would wean the mind,
By strange vicissitudes and endless strife,
From Earth's dull joys, to happiness refin'd
In the pure regions of eternal life—

Where crowns of glory for the good await,
Whose dazzling splendor, to our eyes unknown,
Shall far surpass the eastern monarch's state
'Mid all the gaudy glitter of his throne.

No more then, Henry, I lament thy fall,
Or envy guilty Richard his renown :
Nor Pain nor Death the virtuous man appall ;
Cheer'd by his God, he scorns their idle frown.

But though Prosperity and vain Parade
Through life's short path the wicked may sustain;
Yet a few hours, and all their glories fade,
And nought but grief and bitterness remain.

Farwell, ye scenes of Anarchy and Woe!
From you henceforth be dread Rebellion far!
And ne'er again mayst thou, Britannia, know
The dire misfortunes of intestine war!

Let fickle France indulge each wild extreme,
While Peace and Virtue mourn their injur'd cause;
But long may England baffle every scheme
By Faction form'd against her matchless laws!

For real Liberty is theirs alone
Who bend submissive, Justice, at thy shrine;
Where, studious to support thine equal throne,
The Subject and the Monarch both combine.

WRITTEN ON

LEICESTER ABBEY.

HAIL venerable walls! whose lonely round,
Still shows the stranger what you once have been,
Though now with tufts of flowering elder crown'd,
And vivid ivy's never-fading green.

Thy pristine glories are for ever fled,
Fled the unbounded power that once was thine;
Nor ever more shall rapt Devotion tread
With votive offerings round thy hallow'd shrine.

But where the cloister'd train with Anthems clear,
In long procession swept the vaulted aisle,
Where pale Repentance dropp'd the pious tear,
And Faith 'midst dying agonies could smile,

Nought now but bleating flocks are seen to stray,
Or browsing oxen from the ploughshare led;
Or the rude peasant who at close of day,
Regardless passes o'er the silent dead.

The nightly Bat amid the ruins flits,
The clamorous Daw here builds her airy nest;
While with discordant notes the screech owl sits,
Foreboding woes to Superstition's breast.

Can the reflective mind unmov'd remain,
Where every view invites the moral lay;
And kindly warns the arrogant and vain
Their boasted honours must alike decay.

Methinks, as o'er these grass-grown tombs I tread,
New shadowy forms in solemn order rise,
The Warrior here erects his crested head,
And here the Statesman meets my wondering eyes.

For not alone the undistinguish'd crowd
Of Monks in this forsaken scene are laid;
Here too the Children of Ambition bow'd,
And Death's inevitable tribute paid.

Tir'd with Contention and the din of Arms,
Here * Leicester's Earl, once turbulent and bold,
Sought in monastick gloom those purer charms,
Which Camps or Palaces could ne'er unfold.

Oft on the banks of † Soar he pensive trod,
And swell'd the rapid current with his tears,
While he besought a long neglected God
To blot the errors of his former years.

* The Earl of Leicester, the Founder of this Abbey, who became the first Abbot, and died here.

† The name of a River at Leicester.

Rais'd by his care the sculptur'd arches bend,
The massive columns form the lengthen'd aisle;
In Gothic state the lofty towers ascend,
And proudly crown the consecrated pile.

Though in those ruder ages bigot zeal
Too oft misled the visionary mind;
And round Religion threw a gloomy veil,
Condemning joys which Providence design'd;

Yet far more happy for the human race,
Those rigid laws that deem'd all pleasures crimes,
Than the licentious precepts which debase,
The false Philosophy of modern times.

Within these hospitable walls conceal'd,
Unhappy * Seagrave shunn'd the Barons' hate;
And in some cell obscure his eyes He seal'd,
Who, uncontroul'd, had rul'd the King and State.

* Seagrave, the Minister of Henry III. and who died here.

A more illustrious Mourner yet behold!

Lo, haughty * Wolsey humbl'd to the dust!

Hear him his fortune's sad reverse unfold!

And rue the hour he plac'd in Kings his trust.

How chang'd from him, who, insolent and proud,

The dazzling pomp of Majesty outshone!

Amid whose suit attendant Nobles bow'd,

Rais'd by his smiles, or by his frowns undone :

From him, who foremost in the glitt'ring train,

At Guisnes and Bruges boundless pow'r display'd ;

Where rival Kings his favour sought to gain,

And more than princely honours to him paid.

No more by vain prosperity misled,

To brighter objects here he turn'd his mind;

With resignation bow'd his hoary head,

And dying own'd his cup of sorrow kind.

* Wolsey also died at this Abbey.

Who, then, since such the end of human pow'r,
Would waste in Courts the vigour of their prime?
Or lose one short inestimable hour,
That fills the lessening measure of their time?

Since Wealth and Grandeur in possession cloy,
And oft with unsuspected swiftness part,
With wiser aim, O Man! thy thoughts employ,
To cultivate the mind, to mend the heart.

With awful wonder mark yon vaulted sky,
Observe those ponderous planets how they roll;
The vast expanse of endless space descry,
And trembling to it's Maker lift thy soul;

Turn, then, to sublunary scenes thine eyes,
Behold what trifles mortals toil to gain;
And ask thy mind if those they greatest prize,
Can merit aught but pity and disdain.

ON

PARTING WITH A MOTHER.

IN MDCCXC.

PAINFUL Reflection, why thus force the tear

Which sad Reality shall claim too soon?

While idly midnight's dread approach I fear,

Fearing I waste the present cheerful noon!

Fancy anticipates the fond embrace,

The watery eye, the voice suppress'd by grief,

The brow where not a glimpse of hope we trace,

The heavy heart that looks not for relief!

Fancy, who paints for others scenes of joy,
For me paints colours of a darker hue,
And by the thought can all my peace destroy,
That I must bid my first, best friend adieu.

Ah! when that hour, which bears me far away
From all that once this aching heart held dear,
Shall come at last, can then cold Reason say
One word of comfort to Affliction's ear?

Nor Thou, to whom at Hymen's sacred shrine
I vow'd obedience, constancy and love,
Shalt blame a heart that is not wholly thine,
Or ever filial feelings disapprove.

For she, who could a tranquil mind preserve,
Who could unmov'd the parting scene endure,
Form'd for ingratitude, would ill deserve
A flame like thine disint'rested and pure;

I know thou 'lt try my anguish to restrain,
By future hopes my present grief to cheat;
Thou 'lt promise too, nor be that promise vain,
That soon again the parted friends shall meet.

Delightful thought! that can with magic art
Diffuse the glow of pleasure o'er my cheek;
Can pluck the thorn of sorrow from my heart,
And to my ear can consolation speak.

If thou wilt, Fancy, paint a future scene,
Paint that, when we shall shortly meet again—
Paint the enraptur'd eye, the festive mien,
Paint the wild joy, so near allied to pain.

Then, friendly Fancy, will I court thy stay,
Then shalt thou fondly be by me caress'd;
But, if thou wilt not paint that happy day,
Fly with Reflection from my tortur'd breast.

LINES

ADDRESSED TO

A MOTHER IN IRELAND.

WILL she, whose kind maternal care
Enlighten'd my untutor'd mind,
Who all her joys with me did share,
But to her breast each grief confin'd,

Accept these tears that freely flow—
Accept this tributary lay?
'Tis all that friendship can bestow,
Or weeping gratitude repay.

Whether constraint my footsteps lead
Amid a hated World, or free
I wander o'er the russet mead,
My constant thoughts are fix'd on thee.

On Lehená's* enchanting scene
I muse, where we delighted stray'd;
The sloping hill, the valley green,
The lawn in brightest flowers array'd.

Say, dost thou in those meadows rove,
Where Taste with Nature is combin'd?
Or dost thou haunt that silent grove,
That charm'd so oft my pensive mind?

O may those scenes a bliss bestow
Which rural life alone can boast;
And thou, dear friend, each comfort know
Which by thine absence I have lost!

* The name of the Writer's native place.

May sprightly Health with rosy lip
Breathe rich vermilion o'er thy cheek!
Light round thy paths may Pleasure trip,
And young Content with aspect meek!

May Science gild each tedious hour,
And spread her stores before thine eye;
And Friendship, with resistless power,
Repress each sad intruding sigh!

May Peace around thine honour'd head
Her fairest olive wreath entwine;
Soft slumbers guard thy downy bed,
And Hope, fond charmer, still be thine!

May Truth and Innocence descend,
Their purer blessings to impart;
Blessings that on thyself depend,
Unknown but to the virtuous heart!

Yet, when thy circling friends appear,
And greet thee on Ierne's shore,
Devote one sympathetic tear
To her, who sees thee now no more!

TO

A FRIEND.

WRITTEN IN M DCC XC.

AH, say not, young Shepherdess, I am to blame,
When I tell you the swains are untrue;
Nor think that each youth is possess'd of a flame
Who swears he's devoted to you.

The artful Lysander, his love is exprest
In accents so winningly sweet,
As might tempt the fleet moments delighted to rest
Inactive, their pleasure-wing'd feet.

Gay Damon will tell you, though splendid the sun,
'Tis not half so brilliant as you;
And thus in a strain of high compliments run,
Perhaps not a syllable true.

Aricius walks stately and proud o'er the plain,
In the mirror his image he'll view;
But when you appear, even Aricius the vain
Enraptur'd kneels captive to you.

But, dearest Lamira, may you never prove
With humiliation this truth:
That interest governs their actions, not love,
That your gold has more charms than your youth!

In vain lavish Nature had spread o'er your cheek
Those roses unsullied by Art;
In vain from your eyes sprightly Genius might speak
The thoughts that ennoble your heart—

Had not Fortune, indulgent, embellish'd each grace
 With varnish that never can fade;
Whose lustre, when wrinkles shall alter your face,
 Shall throw a new light o'er the shade.

Enough of the youths of Arcadia I've told,
 Nor further intend to advise;
Lamira may fancy my censures too bold,
 But my pen paints the heart, not the eyes.

ODE

TO

SOLITUDE.

SOLITUDE, celestial maid,
Once again to thee I bow;
And beneath the beechen shade
Pour to thee my ardent vow:

Mingled with the worldly crowd,
Thee my heart has still ador'd;
Nor could Pleasures revels loud,
E'er to me one joy afford.

Come then with that form divine,
Such as in Ierne's isle,
While I heap'd thy rustic shrine,
Oft you deign'd on me to smile.

Come with modest easy mien,
Unconstrain'd by modish art,
Blooming cheek, and eye serene,
Tranquil mind, and spotless heart.

Spread new verdure o'er the plain,
Add fresh odours to the breeze,
Crown the feather'd songster's strain
With unwonted melodies.

Lead me through yon waving grove,
Where the thickest boughs unite,
'Mid its mazes let me rove,
Wrapt with thee from mortal sight.

And from thy sequester'd cell
Bring the sober train along,
Who delight with thee to dwell,
Shelter'd from the guilty throng:

Meditation, pensive fair,
Deep immers'd in thought profound,
Leisure with unruffled air,
Careless pacing o'er the ground:

Active Health, with ruddy face,
Bounding thro' the woodlands wild,
Beauty with unstudied grace,
Temperance, with carriage mild—

Happy they who ne'er have flown
From thy pure and gentle reign,
Happier who, life's quicksands known,
Rush to peace, and thee again.

For them sweeter scents the rose,
Clearer flows for them the stream,
Richer tints the groves disclose,
Brighter shines the morning beam.

From each vain delusion freed,
Passion's helpless slaves no more,
They, while fairer views succeed,
Smiling think on dangers o'er.

Thus the slumberer wrapt in night,
Pines 'mid visions of distress,
But with the returning light,
Wakes to real happiness.

ON
THE LATE
PARTITION of POLAND.

WRITTEN IN AUGUST M DCC LXCIII.

DARK-brow'd Nemefis descend,
Grasp thy sharp avenging steel :
Freedom's holy cause defend,
Let her foes thy terrors feel.

See, o'er yon devoted land,
Stern Oppression's banners wave !
Mercenary Squadrons stand,
Helpless Millions to enslave !

Tyrant of the frozen North,
 Cannot slow declining age
Call a late Repentance forth,
 And thy thirst of power assuage?

Plac'd on an Imperial Throne,
 Crimson'd with thy Consort's blood,
Wherefore seek not to atone
 Evils past, by present good.

Why with restless ardour haste
 New dominions to obtain,
While 'mid chill Siberia's waste
 Trackless solitudes remain?

Monarch, on whose haughty brows,
 Shines immortal Frederick's crown,
Thou who seek'st with broken vows
 Frederick's power, but not renown.

Mark with what indignant eyes
Europe views thy lawless deed!
Hark what secret curses rise!
Yet avert them, and recede!

Nor the golden meed so bright,
Nor the laurel wreath, impart
Half that exquisite delight,
One good action yields the heart,

But if conquest charms thy soul,
Lo the common Foes of Peace!
Gallia's frantic bands controul;
Make her crimes, her sorrows cease!

Join, with *real ardour* join,
In the Universal Cause!
Shield Religion's sacred shrine,
Private Safety, Public Laws!

To the generous zeal aspire,
All in England's Monarch praise!
Emulate with kindred fire
York's and Cobourg's well earn'd bays.

So shall justice point thy sword,-
And direct thy road to fame;
So shall white-rob'd Peace restor'd
'Mid her heroes grave thy name.

Idle hopes! nor just remorse,
Nor surrounding nations hate,
Check the despots—tyrant force
Seals already Poland's fate.

Injur'd Realm, yet cease to pine,
Let reflection sooth thy woes;
Transient servitude is thine,
Everlasting shame thy foes.

TO
HOPE.

DELUSIVE companion of youth,
Who careless of present and past,
In prospect, unmindful of truth,
Canst flatter the wretch to the last!

Benignant deceiver, whose sway
Alone can life's pilgrimage glad,
Whose presence makes Misery gay,
And whose absence Prosperity sad!

Say, where dost thou love to reside,
Humanity's woes to assuage?
Youth's sanguine pursuits dost thou guide,
Or soften the rigour of Age?

Or dost thou with Piety join,
The pillow of sickness to smooth,
On the breasts of the dying recline,
And their fears by thy promises sooth?

Dost thou tell them how vain each desire,
Which saddens the children of clay?
And the cheering reflection inspire,
That Death to true life leads the way?

If such thou wilt visit my breast,
Come, friendly enchantress, ah come—
This heart of each weakness divest,
And fix its pursuits past the tomb!

VIRTUE.

BLOOMING Beauty, brilliant Wit,
Shall with life's short moment flit :
Brighter Virtue must endure
Everlasting and secure.
That shall gild our solemn hours,
Strew our thorny path with flowers,
Dry Affliction's rising tear,
Ease the mind of every fear.
Even to our latest breath,
In the cold embrace of Death,
When each hope of life shall fail,
When the quivering lip grows pale,
When the languid pulse beats low,
When the cheek forgets to glow,
When the heavy eye is clos'd,
And once-busy frame compos'd ;
Even then shall Virtue's voice
Bid the Christian's soul rejoice ;

Bid her look beyond the gloom
Of the dread-inspiring tomb,
Wrapt in shades of endless night,
To the realms of lasting light,
Where a Saviour's boundless love
Death for ever shall remove.

TO
SENSIBILITY.

PARENT of Ecstasy and Woe,
Whose sparkling eye's impearl'd with tears,
Whose varying cheeks grow pale, and glow,
With groundless hopes, with groundless fears!

Cease, soft enchantress, o'er my breast
Thus to exert thy magic sway;
No more this aching heart molest,
Too long thy weak, defenceless prey!

Each momentary boasted joy,
Which to your votaries you give,
Each transient sweet too short to cloy,
But ill thy lasting pangs relieve.
Then, free from bliss, from anguish free,
Leave me to dull Tranquillity!

TO
CONTENTMENT.

CONTENTMENT, rosy, dimpled fair,
Thou brightest daughter of the sky,
Why dost thou to the hut repair,
And from the gilded palace fly?

I've trac'd thee on the peasant's cheek;
I've mark'd thee in the milk-maid's smile;
I've heard thee loudly laugh and speak,
Amid the sons of Want and Toil.

Yet, in the circles of the Great,
Where Fortune's gifts are all combin'd,
I've sought thee early, sought thee late,
And ne'er thy lovely form could find.
Since then from Wealth and Pomp you flee,
I ask but Competence and Thee.

TO
ADVERSITY.

HAIL, pallid nymph, with downcast eye,
With sable garb, and head reclin'd,
Severely kind Adversity,
Preceptress of the thoughtless mind!

'Tis thine to draw dark Error's veil
From the deluded eyes of youth;
To teach the heart of Pride to feel,
And lead the wanderer to Truth.

Though venal Flattery and Deceit
Ne'er offer incense at thy shrine,
Pity still seeks thy lone retreat,
And real Friendship still is thine.
For, as pure gold by fire we prove,
Adversity's the test of love.

WRITTEN
IN WINTER.

Now o'er the fading landscape all around
His silver mantle hoary Winter spreads:
No more the groves with melody resound,
No cheerful herbage crowns the lonely meads.

Bleak blows the wind o'er yon deserted plain;
While lowering clouds obscure the wintry sky,
And sickening Nature sees with tender pain
The flowery progeny of Summer die.

Thus, in warm youth, vain Beauty's fleeting power
Charms for a moment Love's fantastic eye;
Old Age or Sickness crops the short-liv'd flower,
And wither'd all its brightest honours lie.
But Virtue, arm'd against Time's rudest blast,
Shall, like the laurel, ever verdant last.

ON
A CHILD.

WHAT quick sensations crowd my anxious breast,
As o'er thy infant form my eyes are cast!
What pleasing views my flattering hopes suggest!
What groundless fears those happy prospects blast!

Now gay Idea paints thy future years,
Thy mind unequal'd, unexcell'd thy charms;
Pensive Affection now impels my tears,
And fond Solitude my soul alarms.

O may that God, whose endless bounty gave
So dear a boon my sorrows to assuage,
In tender mercy my Louisa save,
To glad my youth, and cheer my drooping age!
And when this bosom heaves its parting sigh,
May thy lov'd hand be near to close my darkening eye!

ON
THE SAME.

LITTLE idol of my heart,
Thou to me canst joys impart
Greater than the glittering prize
To Ambition's eager eyes:
Greater than the summer rose
To the airy bee bestows:
Greater than the youth's despair
To the haughty fair one's ear:
Greater than that fair one's smile,
Skill'd her lovers to beguile,
To the enamour'd youth can give,
Should she bid him love and live.
Soon the beauty shall decay,
Soon the rose shall fade away,
Soon the lover's flame is o'er,
Power obtain'd soon charms no more:

But nor Time, nor Fortune's change,
Can my love from thee estrange—
That, on firmer motives plac'd,
Shall with my existence last.

 THE SAME.

THESE tender buds that grace the early year,
 To my fond mind recall thy infant state;
 What blasts may yet those opening blossoms sear!
 What perils round thy heedless youth may wait!

O, ne'er may Passion with her boisterous train
 Deform the beauties of that angel face!
 O, ne'er may Artifice that breast distain,
 And all thy innate excellence debase!

Thine be the promise of the early Spring,
 And Summer's full-blown honours all be thine!
 To thee may Autumn fruits maturest bring,
 And in Life's Winter mayst thou ne'er repine!
 Then wing thy flight amid the trackless sky,
 To happier scenes of bright Eternity.

SENTI
WITH SOME POEMS.

To thee, dear partner of my fate,
This poetry I consecrate;
Nor will thy friendly heart refuse
The tribute of an artless Muse,
Whose strains could never condescend
On Vice or Folly to attend,
Could never Vanity inflate,
Or offer incense to the Great;
In which no line did e'er appear
But as thy candid breast sincere.
If they in aught have merit shown,
That merit thou mayst call thy own—
Since thou dost oft my thoughts engage
Attentive o'er the classic page,
While listening to the magic lay
Whole days unheeded pass away;

Since 'twas to please thy partial mind
My pen to poetry inclin'd.
And if the trifle should have power
Thee to amuse one vacant hour,
Let others to loud fame aspire,
Thy praise is all that I desire.

FINIS.

WRITTEN BY
MRS. COWLEY,
ON READING THE
VERSES OF LADY MANNERS
TO
SOLITUDE.

ALL that polish'd Thought adores
FLAMING MUSES ever bring;
Grant to Her your choicest Stores—
Her who can so sweetly sing!

Pour before her *vision'd* eye
Scenes which ye alone can give;
Bid all Earth-born troubles fly—
Bid your *Fascinations* live!

Spread around her softest shades
Where the mountain lours from high ;
Where the glossy day-stream fades
Place *your* lustres in the sky.

Tip for her each starry gleam
With a splendor not its own,
Bidding *your* effulgence beam
O'er the Night's dim opal throne,

Rouse for her the slumb'ring notes
Which the forest lately heard ;
Touch the waken'd warblers throats,
Tune a-new each sprightly bird.

Not the moping Nightingale
Wake to join its pensive moan—
For its softest, tenderest tale,
MANNERS gives in sweeter tone.

Lead her where the distant Sea
 Clinging to its rocky shores,
 Slow, unwilling, seems to flee,
 And in Sorrow ceaseless roars.

When the tott'ring Abbey hangs,
 Bid the fair one musing rove—
 Pining, that Time's cruel fangs
 Tear the haunts of Faith and Love.

Where the Castle's turrets swell
 'Cross the black and barren moor,
 To the weeping Beauty tell
 "*Days of chivalry are o'er.*"

There no more, in tourneys grand,
 Break the lance shall *steely* Knight,
 Or dispute from foreign land
 Vaunted name of lady bright—

But there SOLITUDE is found—

She the graceful Poet woos;

Seated lowly on the ground,

Wet with ever-rising dews.

She ponders on the mould'ring Walls,

Marks where crumbled Arches lie;

Trembles as the grey Mass falls—

As the gothic wonders fly.

SOLITUDE! call forth thy smiles,

On thy cheek let roses grow;

She, whose glance all care beguiles,

Bids thy charms immortal glow.

MANNERS strikes to thee her lyre,

Decks a-new thy thoughtful mein,

Sing thee with poetic fire—

Bloom then, grateful, to her strain;

Dated from SOUTHAMPTON,

October 4, 1793.









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Huntingtower, Catherine
Rebecca (Grey) Talmash
Poems

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